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Retrospect of a Coleopterist for 1909.

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The additions to our list which I had the pleasure of recording last year were more numerous than they had been for many years. In view of this, one might expect that there would be a lull in the outburst of activity this year, but the following records will show that the output of the present year has been quite equal to that of the preceding one. It will be necessary, therefore, for me to condense the remarks I have to make in regard to the various additions which are to be chronicled. A few general remarks must be made, however, before I begin to record the various additions. First of all, it is necessary to point out that no fewer than seven of this year's additions are new to science: moreover, we have, for the first time for many years, to note the addition of a new Buprestid to our scanty list of insects belonging to this family. In regard to some of this year's additions, there will be differences of opinion. We have undoubtedly entered upon an era of "species-splitting," if I may use such an expression. With our present scanty knowledge of the life-history of the majority of beetles, this creation of new species, based generally upon obscure structural differences, differences moreover which are, as a rule, only comparative, is in my view of little real service to science. It is to be observed that this splitting into species is resorted to only in the case of insects which are so minute that they have to be examined under a fairly high-power microscope before the supposed structural differences can be detected; in the case of insects of comparatively large bulk, differences far more easily observable are either never noticed, or, if they are noted, no one dreams of proposing to divide into different species insects showing such differences.

Laccobius scutellaris, Motsch.—Introduced by Dr. Sharp, *Ent. Mo. Mag.*, xlv., p. 217. A specimen was taken at Chobham as far back as 1878 by Mr. Champion, and Dr. Sharp has himself recently captured specimens at Brockenhurst; it is most nearly allied to *sinuatus*, Motsch., but is much darker in colour.

Anacaena orata, Reiche.—Mr. J. Edwards says (*loc. cit.*, p. 169) that he can satisfactorily separate the insects so far known as *limbata*, F., into two distinct forms, and the lighter in colour of these two forms is the above species. In the latest European Catalogue, and by Ganglbauer, *orata* is considered a synonym of *limbata*. The whole question turns upon what constitutes a claim to specific rank.

Ocyusa defecta, Muls. et Rey.—Introduced by Mr. E. A. Newbery (*loc. cit.*, p. 150) on a specimen taken at Tiverton, Devon, by Mr. S. G. Rendel, in November, 1908; it is most nearly allied to *O. maura*, Er.

Calodera rufescens, Kraatz.—Introduced by Mr. G. C. Champion (*loc. cit.*, p. 52) on specimens taken at Sandown, Isle of Wight, and at Colchester. It is allied to *C. riparia*, Er.

Homalota scotica, sp. n.—Described (*Ent. Rec.*, xxi., p. 33) by Mr. E. G. Elliman from specimens taken by Mr. Donisthorpe and the writer out of flood refuse on the banks of the Spey at Nethy Bridge, in September, 1908.

Homalota parens, Muls. et Rey.—Introduced by Mr. G. C. Champion (*Ent. Mo. Mag.*, xlv., p. 5) on a specimen taken near Guildford. It has the general facies of *H. melanaria*, Man., but is not nearly so large, and has much shorter antennæ.

Homalota fussi, Bernh. = *nitens*, Füss.—Introduced by Mr. G. C. Champion (*loc. cit.*, p. 31) on a specimen taken at Mickleham in 1875; it has much the general appearance of a *Placusa*.

Myrmecopora brevipes, sp. n.—Described by Mr. E. A. Butler (*loc. cit.*, p. 29) from specimens taken at Tintagel, Plymouth, etc. It differs from *M. uvida*, Er., in its proportionately shorter antennæ and legs; it is a less robust insect.

Epipeda nigricans, Thoms.—Introduced by Dr. Joy (*loc. cit.*, p. 268), on two specimens taken under pine bark at Blair Atholl, Perthshire, on September 5th, 1909.

Lathrobium dilutum, Erichs.—This species was also introduced by Dr. Joy (*loc. cit.*, p. 268) on specimens found under stones on the shore of Loch Ericht, and in flood refuse on the river Truim, in September and October, 1909.

Bledius denticollis, Fauv.—Introduced by Mr. F. H. Fryer (*loc. cit.*, p. 6) on specimens taken on the banks of the Nethy at Nethy Bridge. Dr. Sharp also took it at the same place. It is very like *B. opacus*, Block., but is distinguishable by the right-angled tooth-like projecting hind angles of the thorax.

Thinobius pallidus, sp. n.—Described (*loc. cit.*, p. 4) by Mr. E. A. Newbery from specimens taken by Mr. Britten under stones at the side of the river Eden, Great Salkeld, Cumberland. It may be known by its entirely testaceous colour, and the structure of the antennæ.

Homalium brevicolle, Thoms.—Introduced by Dr. Joy (*loc. cit.*, p. 102) on a specimen taken in carrion at Great Salkeld by Mr. Britten; it comes near to *exiguum*, Gyll. Dr. Sharp was of opinion (*loc. cit.*, p. 135) that the correct name was *H. foraminosum*, Miklin, but he later (p. 214) abandoned this idea; he had captured the insect in Scotland.

Proteinus crenulatus, Pandellé.—Introduced by Dr. Sharp (*loc. cit.*, p. 267) on specimens found at Nethy Bridge; it is like *P. brachypterus*, F., but is blacker and more shining, and the base of the antennæ is not clear red.

Scydmaenus barnerillei, Reitt.—Dr. Joy introduced (*loc. cit.*, p. 54) this species on specimens taken out of cormorants' and gulls' nests from the Scilly Isles. The identification was confirmed by Reitter, who was of opinion that *barnerillei* was a synonym of *poweri*, Fow. Dr. Joy says this is not so. It may be mentioned that the latest European Catalogue treats *poweri* as a synonym of *scutellaris*, Müll.

Euplectus anbeanus, Reitt.—In an article on our so-called species

E. kunzei, Aubé, and *E. duponti*, Aubé (*loc. cit.*, p. 74), Mr. Champion showed that all our specimens standing under the name *kunzei* were really *aubeanus*, Reitt., and this name must, therefore, be added to our list. The name *kunzei*, or rather *brunneus*, Grimmer, of which *kunzei* is only a synonym, remains in our list, because some of the specimens hitherto called *duponti* have been incorrectly determined; they are *brunneus*, Grimmer.

Micropeplus caelatus, Erics.—Introduced by Dr. Joy and Mr. Tomlin (*loc. cit.*, p. 149) on specimens taken at Cloghane, Co. Kerry, in April, 1909. It is most nearly allied to *M. porcatus*, Payk.

Riolus (Elmis) sodalis, Er.—Introduced by Mr. J. Edwards (*loc. cit.*, p. 76) on a specimen taken at Christow, Devon, by Mr. Champion; Mr. Edwards gave a table for separating our four species of this subgenus.

Parnus griseus, Er.—Introduced by Dr. Sharp (*loc. cit.*, p. 123), who stated that he considered that we had now seven indigenous species of this genus.

Parnus (Dryops) anglicanus, sp. n.—Described by Mr. J. Edwards (*loc. cit.*, p. 218) on specimens taken at Horning in May, 1888, and again in 1909. Mr. Edwards gave a drawing of the vertical aspect of the cedeagus to show the difference between it and that of *auriculatus*, Fourc.

Aphodius niger, Panz.—Dr. Sharp reinstated this species in the British list (*loc. cit.*, p. 129) on the strength of a specimen taken at Brockenhurst, and Mr. Champion has since that date taken the species freely at the same locality. In discussing the previous records of this species as a British insect, Dr. Sharp expressed the opinion that they were all erroneous; he also stated that he had two specimens, one taken at Deal, and one in the New Forest, which did not agree with *niger*, Panz., or with the immaculate ab. of *playiatus*.

Melanophila acuminata, De G.—Introduced by Mr. Champion (*loc. cit.*, p. 247) on specimens taken in the pine-woods near Woking, in August and September, 1909; this fine Buprestid is a most unlooked-for addition to our list, and the most interesting of the year's captures. Mr. Champion gave an account of all the beetles he had taken in these pine-woods, including such insects as *Crioccephalus ferus*, Muls., and *Anchomenus quadripunctatus*, De G.

Chaetocnema arida, Foud.—Introduced by Mr. Donisthorpe (*Ent. Record*, xxi., p. 259) on specimens taken in the Whitefield Woods, Ryde, Isle of Wight, on August 26th, 1909. The species comes near to *hortensis*, Geof., but has a narrower thorax, and thorax and head are more finely punctured.

Rabocerus (Salpingus) bishopi, sp. n.—Described by Dr. Sharp (*Ent. Mo. Mag.*, xlv., p. 245) from specimens taken at Grantown, Speyside, by himself and Mr. T. G. Bishop.

In the same article, Dr. Sharp described another European species new to science, *R. championi*, from specimens taken in Switzerland by Mr. Champion.

Anaspis hudsoni, sp. n.—Described by Mr. Donisthorpe (*Ent. Record*, xxi., p. 60) from a specimen found at Nethy Bridge in the centre of a hard, woody fungus, on Scots fir, on September 16th, 1908. The article is illustrated by a plate showing the male appendages of the whole of the British species of the genus.

Pityogenes trepanatus, Noerdl.—Introduced by Dr. Joy (*Ent. Mo. Mag.*, xlv., p. 269) on a specimen swept up at Blair Atholl, Perthshire, on September 3rd, 1909.

Evechesops jordani, sp. n.—This is an exotic insect found at Kew Gardens, new to science, and described by Mr. W. E. Sharp (*loc. cit.*, p. 221). It was introduced in a consignment of lily seeds from the Tanganyika district of Africa; it is a very remarkable and fine Anthribid.

Diestota testacea, Kraatz.—This insect was found by Mr. W. E. Sharp at Shirley, in the débris of decayed wood (*loc. cit.*, p. 269). It was first described from the East Indies. It appears to have become acclimatised in South Europe, and possibly may become so here; in the meantime it must go into the special list of known introduced insects.

The following new varieties and aberrations have been added:—*Trichopteryx intermedia* var. *thomsoni*, I. B. Ericson.—Introduced by Mr. Donisthorpe (*Ent. Record*, xxi., p. 58) on specimens taken by him and the writer at Newtonmore, in June, 1907.

Coccinella 10-punctata ab. *confluens*, Haworth.—This was also introduced by Mr. Donisthorpe (*loc. cit.*, p. 136); he captured a specimen at Darenth on May 16th, 1908.

Sitaris muralis, Forst. ab. *flava*, n. ab.—This new aberration was described by Mr. Hamm (*Ent. Mo. Mag.*, xlv., p. 277) on specimens taken at Oxford; it has the whole of the elytra, wing membrane, and abdomen clear yellow in colour.

Cryptophagus pallidus var. *argenteus*, n. var.—Dr. Joy exhibited this new variety at a meeting of the Entomological Society of London, on November 3rd (*loc. cit.*, p. 284); it differs from the type by having silvery pubescence.

We have thus an addition of 28 species and 4 varieties and aberrations: two, however, are introduced species, and one at least of the others is a somewhat doubtful species.

In view of the length of the above list of additions, I can only afford space for a brief notice of the capture of rare species during the year. Dr. Joy records *Olophrum consimile*, Gyll., from Ben Wyvis; Mr. Keys, *Athicus augustatus*, Curt., from Bigbury Bay, in plenty; Mr. Butler, *Cathormiocerus maritimus*, Rye, from Tintagel (this insect has been found recently by Mr. C. J. C. Pool, in the old locality—Portsmouth); Mr. Day, *Meligethes subrugosus*, Gyll., from Cumberland; Mr. de la Garde, *Sibinia sodalis*, Germ., and *Cardiophorus equiseti*, Hbst., both in numbers from Braunton; Commander Walker, *Trimum brevicorne*, Reich., from Cobham Park, and *Neuraphes rubicundus*, Schaum, from Strood (Mr. Collins has also taken it at Oxford); Mr. Cameron, *Emus hirtus*, L., from Sheppey, in fair numbers; Mr. Bedwell, *Hetaerius ferrugineus*, Ol., and *Cassida fastuosa*, Schall., from Box Hill, and what appears to be *Hypera melles*, F., from Coulsdon; Mr. Tomlin, *Tropideres sepicola*, F., and *Cionus longicollis*, Bris., from Harewood Forest. In conclusion, I may mention that Mr. Donisthorpe and the writer took *Trechus rivularis*, Gyll., at Wicken Fen in September.

Many interesting notes have appeared in our entomological journals. Mr. Newbery (*Ent. Mo. Mag.*, xlv., pp. 32 and 53), in his "Notes on various British Coleoptera," pointed out that our *Adrastus limbatus*, Fab., was now called on the continent *A. nitidulus*, Marsh,

and that the *Athous niger*, L., of our collections, was really *A. hirtus*, Hbst.; in the same article he gave some further characters for separating *Trachyploeus aristatus*, Gyll., and *T. squamulatus*, Ol., and also *Othius melanocephalus*, Grav., and *O. myrmecophilus*, Kies; he also again expressed the opinion that the insects we call *Melanotus castanipes*, Payk., are only large specimens of *M. rufipes*, Herbst. I must again express my disagreement with this view. In an interesting note entitled "On the *Miarus micros* of British Catalogues" (*loc. cit.*, p. 99), Mr. E. A. Butler adduced evidence to show that this species does occur in Great Britain, having been taken at Caterham, Mickleham, Box Hill, etc.; he thought it was possible we had another species (undescribed) coming very near to *M. micros*, but distinct from it. Mr. J. Edwards discussed in an article entitled "On the British species of *Chalcoides*, Foudras" (*loc. cit.*, p. 127), the synonymy of the five British species, and certainly, if we are to follow continental usage, we must change at least three of the names: *chloris*, Foudras, becomes *plutus*, Latr.; *smaragdina*, Foudr., becomes *fulvicornis*, Fab.; and *helvius*, Brit. Cat., becomes *aurea*, Geoff. Mr. Edwards gave a new table for separating the species (I personally have never found any difficulty in doing this with the aid of the table given by Canon Fowler), and mentioned most of the colour aberrations of the various species. Dr. Joy, in a paper "Notes on the male genitalia of *Anisotoma anglica*, Rye, and *Gnathoncus nidicola*, Joy" (*loc. cit.*, p. 219), showed that with the aid of these characters he was able to separate definitely *A. anglica* from *A. cinnamomea*, Pz. (in this he differs from Dr. Fleischer, who professes his inability to see any difference in these organs in the two forms), and *G. nidicola*, Joy, from *G. rotundatus*, Kug.; in the latter case an illustration was given to show how very different in shape this organ is in the two forms. Mr. H. Britten had a useful note on the distinctive characters of *Claubus minutus*, Sturm., and *C. punctulum*, Beck. (*loc. cit.*, p. 250); it will be remembered that Mr. Donisthorpe remstated this latter species in our list last year.

There was only one article dealing directly with mimicry, that by Dr. Chapman on "Mimicry of *Phytodecta variabilis*, Oliv., and *Coccinella septempunctata*," L. (*loc. cit.*, p. 186), in which he gave an account of his observations at Amclie-les-Bains, with some remarks on Mr. Bateson's previous account of the species *P. variabilis* (*Proc. Zool. Soc. Lond.*, 1895, pp. 850-860).

Of notes dealing with the distribution of our fauna throughout the country, there were several to which attention may be drawn. Dr. Joy in "A further note on the Coleoptera of the Scilly Isles" (*loc. cit.*, p. 54) brought up the total recorded to date to 331; in this note he stated that he was now convinced that *Sunius lyonessius*, Joy, was a distinct species; I see no reason to modify the opinion I expressed on this point in my "Retrospect for 1908" (*Ent. Record*, xxi., p. 27). Mr. de la Garde gave a valuable list of coleoptera found at Braunton and other places in Devon (*Ent. Mo. Mag.*, p. 86); and Mr. Tomlin published lists of captures in the county of Hereford (*loc. cit.*, pp. 56 and 252).

Attention must be drawn to a paper (*loc. cit.*, p. 196) by Messrs. Champion and Lloyd on some interesting British insects, which was accompanied by a beautiful and accurately coloured plate, illustrating seven of the most interesting additions made to our list during recent years. This plate should stimulate collectors to endeavour to add new

records for these species, all very rare and very local. Those coleopterists who are studying the *Cossonidae* should consult Mr. Champion's notes on that family (*loc. cit.*, pp. 103, 121), in which there is much valuable information on synonymy, distribution, etc.

There were two references to the dispersal or migration of coleoptera; one by Mr. W. E. Sharp describing his experience last May at Bridlington (*Ent. Record*, xxi., p. 164), when he found the sea-shore covered with vast hordes of *Gastroidea polygoni*, L., and other species of beetles, a sudden spell of warmth after severe cold having given an impulse probably to nuptial flight; the other was an account given by Dr. Longstaff at the meeting of the Entomological Society of London on 2nd June, of a flight of *Coccinella 11-punctata*, L., which he had witnessed about 40 miles above Khartoum (*Ent. Mo. Mag.*, xlv., p. 168).

Mr. Donisthorpe published (*Ent. Record*, xxi., p. 257) his Myrmecophilous Notes for 1909, in which he gave additional localities for many ants' nest species; the conclusion of the notes for 1908 appeared on p. 17 of that journal.

In the *Transactions of the Entomological Society of London* for 1909, there appeared only a few papers dealing with coleoptera; one of these, however, was a valuable memoir; it was by Mr. A. M. Lee, the government entomologist of Tasmania, and was entitled, "A Revision of the Australian and Tasmanian *Malacodermidae*." It extended to just over 200 pages (pp. 45-252), and was illustrated by five plates. Mr. Lea brought up the total known species of the family from these regions to 363; he described a large number of new species, corrected synonymy, and gave valuable tables for separating the species of the different genera. He drew attention to the fact that several species of *Oedemeridae* bear a very remarkable resemblance to certain members of the *Malacodermidae* in the company of which they are usually found. He instanced *Pseudolychnus hoemorrhoidalis*, Fab., which is usually found with *Metriorrhynchus rufipennis*, Fab., which it strongly resembles, in fact, like that species, it varies in regard to colour of elytra from entirely reddish to a mere tip of red at the extremity of the elytra. In pt. iii., pp. 397 and 413, Mr. Donisthorpe had two papers; the first, entitled "On the Origin and Ancestral Form of Myrmecophilous Coleoptera," gave an account of the species of coleoptera which are occasionally or often found with ants or in ants' nests in Britain, but more generally away from them; in the second paper, entitled "On the Colonisation of new nests of Ants by Myrmecophilous Coleoptera," after discussing briefly possible hypotheses, the author proceeded to consider the evidence afforded by some of the ants-nests' beetles found in Britain; both papers are very interesting, but much more extensive field observation is wanted before any definite conclusion can be arrived at.

In "The Annals of Scottish Natural History," 1909, April, p. 76, July, p. 145, October, p. 218, Mr. F. Balfour-Browne contributed a paper on "The Aquatic Coleoptera of the Solway District," in which he summarised the previous records of this district, and gave the result of his own three years' work. The paper is characterised by the thoroughness which we always expect from Mr. Balfour-Browne. He recorded about 120 species, and gave a full account of his discovery of such interesting and unexpected species as *Bidessus minutissimus*, Germ., and *Ochthebius lejolisi*, Rey et Muls.

Two valuable local lists appeared during the year. "A Survey and Record of Woolwich and West Kent," published this year at Woolwich, the outcome of the visit of the South-Eastern Union of Scientific Societies to Woolwich in 1907, a volume of 526 pages, contains a list of the coleoptera of that district by Mr. West; he recorded 1350 species, and gave brief notes of the habitat and localities for each species. The second list appeared in the "Guide to the Natural History of the Isle of Wight," edited by Mr. F. Morey, and published at Newport this year. The list was prepared by Mr. Newbery, but, owing to the fact that that gentleman omitted to consult several well-known coleopterists, who have for years collected in the Island, and, further, owing to the fact that for some extraordinary reason, quite inexplicable to most people, Mr. Newbery purposely omitted several interesting and undoubted records, Mr. Donisthorpe was asked to prepare a supplement to Mr. Newbery's list, which contained 1309 species. The supplement increased this by 125, and Mr. Donisthorpe has published (*Ent. Record*, xxi., p. 272) an addition to the above two lists, increasing the total to 1516 species.

It is desirable to mention that the year has seen the beginning of a very ambitious scheme, namely the publication of a "Catalogue of Coleoptera" by Mr. W. Junk, of Berlin, the editing being entrusted to Mr. S. Schenkling; so far three parts have appeared.

I conclude my Retrospect with the feeling that the year 1909 will be one upon which we can look back with satisfaction, as one which has seen a distinct advance in our knowledge of the coleopterous fauna of our native land.

Depressaria putridella, Schiff.—A species new to Britain

(with two plates).

By ALFRED SICH, F.E.S.

(Concluded from vol. xxi., p. 281).

The older British entomologists could only have had the meagre description of the "Vienna catalogue" and Hübner's figure to work by; it is, therefore, not at all surprising that they mistook a dark-veined form of *Depressaria yeatiana*, Fab., for the genuine *D. putridella*, Schiff. The first author to consider is Haworth. He describes a *Depressaria putrida* (the brown-veined), and refers to Hübner's figure of *D. putridella* (*Lep. Brit.*, p. 509, part 3, 1811). Haworth never saw the insect alive, and evidently describes a specimen taken by R. Scales. His description is an excellent one of the dark-veined form of *D. yeatiana*. Indeed, Haworth himself writes, "Ultimæ (*yeatsii*=*yeatiana*) simillimæ sed sufficienter differt, venis fuscis." His description of the stigmata runs as follows: "In medio, at costam versus, puncta quatuor, quadratim posita: horum duo antica minuta, atra; tertium triplo majus, rotundatum, fuscum; quartum minutum subocellare, iride nigrâ, albâ pupillâ." This applies exactly to *D. yeatiana*, but those words I have written in italics could form no part of a description of the stigmata on the forewings of *D. putridella*. Again, of the hindwings, Haworth says, "Posticæ albidae, ciliis amplis, stramineis, sericeis." This is accurate as regards *D. yeatiana*, but inapplicable to *D. putridella*, as has been already shown when comparing these two species.